



LOGJAM IN THE SENATE: HAMPERING AMERICA'S ROLE IN THE WORLD

"The United States continues to operate without a complete diplomatic toolbox to exert our leadership and advance our security and economic interests across the globe..."

— Secretary of State John Kerry

The United States is missing opportunities because too many U.S. ambassadors have not arrived to fill vacant posts. A Senate backlog in confirming ambassadorial candidates has left the United States without permanent ambassadors in 40 countries. Elsewhere, existing ambassadors have moved to their next assignments, while their replacements languish in the confirmation process.

THE DEFICIT

Fifty-eight State Department nominees are awaiting confirmation by the Senate. Thirty-five of them have been approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and could be confirmed immediately by a simple vote of the Senate. Noncontroversial career Foreign Service officers are languishing on the sidelines instead of being on the ground fighting to protect and promote U.S. interests.

The Director General of the Foreign Service — the official in charge of staffing for tens of thousands of State Department employees at 275 missions, including such critical posts as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya — also remains unconfirmed.

WORLDWIDE CONSEQUENCES

The absence of ambassadors in so many capitals sends the wrong message about America's engagement. Defending the security of the United States, promoting American values, and helping U.S. businesses compete to create American jobs at home are critical goals that cannot be ignored.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Turmoil and extremism continue to grow and ambassadorial vacancies linger. The Senate recently confirmed ambassadors to Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait and Qatar, but more needs to be done. For instance, the ambassador-designate to Algeria, a country where we have pressing security interests, remains unconfirmed.

"We can't lead if we are not present."

— Secretary of State John Kerry, July 10, 2014



EUROPE

Eleven countries in Europe are awaiting new ambassadors — more than 20 percent of the U.S. presence. Without the authority of an ambassador, engaging fully with strategic countries like Turkey, a key NATO ally on the front lines of civil war in Syria, is more challenging.

LATIN AMERICA

The lack of an ambassador in Guatemala limits the U.S. ability to find ways to prevent

the flow of unaccompanied minors from Central America across our southwestern border. Throughout the hemisphere, the absence of ambassadors impedes U.S. ability to tackle the illicit trafficking in narcotics, arms, and people.

AFRICA

Eleven nominees await confirmation — nearly 25 percent of the U.S. presence — across this vast and vital continent. No U.S. ambassadors are in Cameroon and Niger, countries that must play a key role in fighting Boko Haram and assisting in the search for the hundreds of girls kidnapped in neighboring Nigeria.

BUSINESS LOSSES

Without ambassadors in place, America's economic interests are compromised. U.S. businesses have sought embassy assistance in pursuing \$119 billion worth of contracts in countries currently without a U.S. ambassador. Last year, top-level diplomatic advocacy was responsible for more than \$5.5 billion worth of contracts awarded to U.S. companies by foreign governments. This translated directly into thousands of jobs for Americans at home.

A SOLUTION

Military nominees to high-ranking positions are confirmed quickly in a block. For America to play a strong and uninterrupted role in the world, we need equal treatment for diplomats.